

TEKIJÄN/ÖRNÄMÖ - FÖRFATTAREN Humanistinen tiedekunta		LAITOS - INSTITUTION Psykologian laitos	
Tekijä - Författare Satu Kyröläinen			
Työn nimi - Arbetets titel Sense of community in Web environment			
Oppiaine - Läroämne Psykologia			
Työn laji - Arbetets art Prp gradu		Aika - Datum Sivumäärä - Sidoantal 43 s + 13 ls	
Tiivistelmä - Referat <p>The study of social phenomena in the World Wide Web has been rather fragmentary, and there is no coherent, reseach-based theory about sense of community in Web environment. Sense of community means part of one's self-concept that has to do with perceiving oneself belonging to, and feeling affinity to a certain social grouping. The present study aimed to find evidence for sense of community in Web environment, and specifically find out what the most critical psychological factors of sense of community would be.</p> <p>Based on known characteristics of real life communities and sense of community, and few occational studies of Web-communities, it was hypothesized that the following factors would be the most critical ones and that they could be grouped as prerequisites, facilitators and consequences of sense of community: awareness and social presence (prerequisites), criteria for membership and borders, common purpose, social interaction and reciprocity, norms and conformity, common history (facilitators), trust and accountability (consequences). In addition to critical factors, the present study aimed to find out if this kind of grouping would be valid. Furthermore, the effect of Web-community members' background variables to sense of community was of interest.</p> <p>In order to answer the questions, an online-questionnaire was created and tested. It included propositions that reflect factors that precede, facilitate and follow the sense of community in Web environment. A factor analysis was calculated to find out the critical factors and analyses of variance were calculated to see if the grouping to prerequisites, facilitators and consequences was right and how the background variables would affect the sense of community in Web environment.</p> <p>The results indicated that the psychological structure of sense of community in Web environment could not be presented with critical variables grouped as prerequisites, facilitators and consequences. Most factors did facilitate the sense of community, but based on this data it could not be argued that some of the factors chronologically precede sense of community and some follow it. Instead, the factor analysis revealed that the most critical factors in sense of community in Web environment are 1) reciprocal involvement, 2) basic trust for others, 3) similarity and common purpose of members, and 4) shared history of members.</p> <p>The most influencing background variables were the member's own participation activity (indicated with reading and writing messages) and the phase in membership lifecycle (from visitor to leader). The more the member participated and the further in membership lifecycle he was, the more he felt sense of community.</p> <p>There are many descreptions of sense of community, but the present study was one of the first to actually <i>measure</i> the phenomenon in Web environment, and that gained well documented, valid results based on large data, proving that sense of community in Web environment is possible, and clarifying its psychological structure, thus enhancing the understanding of sense of community in Web environment.</p>			
Avainsanat - Nyckelord sense of community, Web-community, psychology of the Internet			
Säilytyspaikka - Förvaringställe			
Muita tietoja			